634 the nomination of the village chiefs, who were always selected
621 from the family of the preceding chief.

Let us add that in principle, and all other things being equal,
it was the eldest son of the deceased chief who was supposed to suc-
631 ceed his father, and this applied to village chiefs as well as to canton chiefs, province chiefs, and the Moro Naba. This principle ran counter to the true patriarchal principle where the younger brother is always the natural and legitimate heir of the deceased brother. The requirements of a warlike existence had probably forced it upon the Mossi at the time of their conquest of the Dagomba and Mossi territories.

This principle of direct inheritance (rather than collateral inheritance) had been restricted, however, by the powers of higher authorities represented by canton chiefs vis-à-vis village chiefs, province chiefs vis-à-vis canton chiefs, the Moro Naba vis-à-vis the province chiefs, and the electoral college of the high dignitaries vis-à-vis the future Moro Naba. In short, the warriors' principle of inheritance from father to eldest son ruled among the Mossi in the power sphere, but had to give way to the exigencies of government whenever necessary.

631 Let us not believe that the third principle, namely the consent of the people involved, was altogether unknown among the Mossi (the consent of the village inhabitants in the case of a village chief, of the canton notables in the case of a canton chief, of the province notables in the case of a province chief, etc.) This third principle, however, was the least important, the least taken into account, the least actualized from a mere potential. /577/ Whenever it clashed with the others, it had to give way.

635 Let us add that the majority of Mossi chiefs were aided by rep-
634 resentatives called baloum.

624 "The province chiefs," says the Monographie, "the majority of canton chiefs, and even the chiefs of a few important villages, are aided by one or several baloum or palace masters, whom they choose freely. These are sometimes former captives, but most frequently they are common natives or former sorongé, and they are never nakomsé. Their function is not hereditary. It grants them the right to substitute for the naba, to speak and act in his name."